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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SENIOR OFFICER ORAL HISTORY  
PROGRAM INTERVIEW OF MAJOR GENERAL (RETIRED)  
CHARLES A. HINES**

**BY**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SENIOR OFFICER ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM INTERVIEW OF  
MAJOR GENERAL (RETIRED) CHARLES A. HINES

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## ABSTRACT

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This executive summary highlights the career of MG (RET) Charles A. Hines. He is best known for his research methods integrating women into the Army.

In addition, he has vast experience in race relations and drafting equal opportunity policy for the Army .

The executive summary contains significant events in MG Hines' career, views on women in the Army and migration of blacks into the combat support and combat service support branches are included. The summary also includes statistical data on minority branching of ROTC cadets. The summary suggests methods to address the problems of sexual harassment and placing more blacks into the combat arms.



*"Education is the great equalizer."*

The above quote from MG Charles A. Hines ran as a constant theme of the interview with him as part of the Senior Officer Oral History Program (SOOHP). Recognized throughout the Army, as a leader, teacher and educator, especially within the Military Police Corps, MG Hines' life is another great American success story.

This Executive Summary's intent is not to review every aspect of MG Hines' distinguished career. That is available in the interview transcript. Rather, the goal is to capture the man's ethos. He grew up in a social climate of segregation and racial hatred. In spite of these obstacles, he advanced in rank to become one of the first black general officers. According to MG Hines, the Army's educational opportunities made the difference in his life. The Army gave MG Hines the chance to expand his mind, and then apply that knowledge throughout his career. This education was not merely academic. The learning incorporated academics, leadership, and the age-old lessons of treating all people with dignity and respect. Education involves all aspects of life, and the Army provided an excellent

opportunity to realize his full potential. He recognized the power of education in helping soldiers improve their lives.

Throughout his career, MG Hines influenced important issues the Army deals with today. He pioneered the Army's program integrating women into the force. An expert in race relations and the dynamics involved in interpersonal relationships, he understood the psychological and sociological impacts of trying to best integrate the force. Charles Hines grew up in an atmosphere of biased treatment and racial hatred. These early experiences left a lasting impression. It served as the basis for his insistence that all people be treated with dignity and respect.

Finally, the lessons learned during his enlisted and early Infantry commissioned service helped transform the MP Corps into a true combat support branch. He was the driving force behind moving the MP Corps from a branch best known for its law and order role, to a real battlefield force multiplier.

## OVERVIEW OF MG HINES' CAREER

### *Early Years and Enlisted Service*

Born in Washington D.C. to a middle class family, MG Hines' first memories revolve around the inadequacies he felt as a result of segregation and overt racism. His father died at an early age, forcing fifteen year old Charles to care for his mother and sisters. He dropped out of high school and worked odd jobs including pumping gas at the local service station.

MG Hines enlisted in the Army "as a survival technique...to take care of my mother and sisters."<sup>1</sup> The enlistment took place in 1954, only six years after President Truman ordered desegregation of the military. In spite of the order, MG Hines remembers two separate armies. All social events were segregated, and black and white soldiers did not mix.

Following basic training as a field artillery cannoneer, young Private Hines reported for duty in the Panama Canal Zone. Here he witnessed his first incidents of overt racial bias in the Army community.

The first incident involved a black soldier found sleeping on duty. MG Hines recalls this soldier's court martial and

dishonorable discharge. In contrast, white soldiers found sleeping on duty received much lighter punishments.

The next incident involved young soldier Hines himself. While setting up a video projector, the projector exploded due to a voltage mismatch. He was subsequently charged with destruction of government property and offered nonjudicial punishment. His white defense lawyer took a risky step by even trying to help a black soldier. Found innocent, the episode had a lasting impact on MG Hines. He determined that despite the presence of soldiers who discriminate, the Army as an institution possessed the capacity to make things right.

Completing his Panama tour, an eager Charles Hines decided to leave the Army and attend college using the G.I. Bill. Of one thing young Charles was certain, he did not want to remain in the Army as an enlisted soldier. He determined that further education would lead to a better life.

#### *College Years*

In 1957, 21-year-old Charles Hines enrolled in Howard University. He was neither an academic nor sports standout. He worked full time at the U.S. Post Office to support his family

and attended college courses in his spare time. In addition, due to his enlisted service, MG Hines joined the Howard University ROTC program. He rose quickly in rank, eventually becoming the Corps Commandant of Cadets.

At Howard University, he met several fellow students who rose to prominence in both the military and civilian worlds. Individuals like Togo West, the current Secretary of the Army; Dennis Hightower, Vice President for Disney, European Operations; and Russell Miller, Vice President for Health and Dean of the Howard Medical College, were fellow classmates. Throughout his career, MG Hines stayed in touch with each of these Howard alumni. They were a constant source of encouragement and strength whenever he felt discouraged.

Charles met his spouse, Veronica, at Howard University. He states that she is a tremendous source of strength, and she "allowed me never to take myself too seriously."<sup>2</sup> MG Hines considers his wife to be the consummate Army spouse. During their Army years, she placed no demands on him and understood what he was trying to do with his career.

### *Early Commissioned Service*

Earning his undergraduate degree in physical education, and commissioned as an Army officer, Lieutenant Hines became a military policeman, with a four year branch detail in the infantry. He attended the Infantry Officer Basic Course, Airborne School, and then took command of a mortar section in the 2/9th Infantry, Fort Benning, Georgia. This assignment built a foundation in infantry tactics, and gave him an appreciation he later used to form the MP Corps Rear Battle Doctrine.

Following subsequent MP assignments at Fort Benning and Fort Belvoir, he deployed to Vietnam in 1966. There, he witnessed the best and worst of the Army's officer corps. In combat, enlisted soldiers expected certain qualities from their officers. The outstanding officers led from the front, and always had their soldier's best interests in mind. In contrast, many officers would not risk putting themselves into harms way. They milked the war for their own personal advancement. Self-serving officers gave themselves awards they did not earn, and had no interest in caring for their soldiers. MG Hines came out of Vietnam convinced that every commissioned officer should first serve as an enlisted soldier. The only way to truly appreciate

how a soldier feels is to wear his boots and see the Army from his viewpoint.

*Field Grade Commissioned Service*

Assignments at the MP School, graduate school, Command and General Staff College, Korea, and CID, followed. He then earned a Ph.D. in Sociology at John Hopkins University. After command of a MP Battalion, then Lieutenant Colonel Hines attended the Army War College in 1979. He remained at Carlisle Barracks on the faculty as a Strategic Research Analyst, and later as the Director of Evaluation and Organizational Effectiveness. In this capacity, he researched and initiated a program measuring a student's writing proficiency. This methodology is still in use today. MG Hines saw a clear deficiency in the writing ability of his fellow War College students. The current program evaluates each student at an early stage, and assists those needing additional instruction.

In addition, he initiated many of the methods used to integrate women into the Army. An algorithm developed by MG Hines determined the combat probability code for every Army military occupational skill (MOS). During this study, MG Hines

became known as one who analyzed a problem and developed reasonable solutions. As a problem solver, he was an innovator not constrained by traditional values. He could think "out of the box." Contrary to conventional wisdom, he demonstrated how women could serve in military police, engineer, and field artillery branches. Later assigned to the Pentagon, he continued his research on women in the Army. Specifically, then Colonel Hines was the Deputy Director, then Director of the "Women in the Army Policy Review Group." The group's mission was to determine how best to grow women in the Army. The group concentrated on increasing the presence of women, but in a way that was rational, coherent, and did not put women or anyone else at a disadvantage. MG Hines believes that the group was generally successful in recommending policy and procedures that integrated women with a minimum of disruption.

While still in the Pentagon, then Colonel Hines was selected to command a MP brigade in Germany. In 1983, the Hines family moved to Kornwestheim, Germany, where Colonel Hines commanded the 14th MP Brigade. He developed and maintained excellent relationships with his German Army counterparts and civilians. As a brigade commander, he developed the MP Corps Rear Battle Doctrine. He demonstrated how the military police, with their

training, equipment, and communications, were the force of choice in the Corps rear area. His proudest achievement was successfully showing to the senior generals in Europe how the military police were a real force multiplier. While in command, his selection to Brigadier General occurred.

*General Officer Service*

In 1985, his first general officer assignment was Director, Officer Personnel Management (OPMD), MILPERCEN (now PERSCOM), with responsibility for the assigning, schooling, and professional career development of all Army competitive category officers. In his first meeting with the staff and assignment officers in OPMD, BG Hines laid out his expectation that every officer in the force be treated with dignity and respect. In addition, he quickly embarked on a project to improve the quality of the Reserved Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadre. He felt that only the best should train future Army leadership. From the outset, he personally approved each ROTC assignment and ensured a minority and female cadre mix reflective of the force.

In July 1989, upon promotion to Major General, he became the MP School Commandant at Fort McClellan, Alabama. Here, he

continued advocating the vital role military police play on the battlefield. He initiated the procurement of the Armored Security Vehicle (ASV), coming on line in 1997. This vehicle provides MPs on the battlefield with the protection they need to perform their rear area security mission. Commandant Hines demonstrated to the Army's senior leadership that the military police were the force of choice in crisis response and high intensity rear battle operations. Through briefings and many hours of personal lobbying, he outlined the principle role MPs play in security and humanitarian assistance operations by visibly projecting an "assist and protect" image. Military Police provide a nonlethal alternative to combat units and are more politically acceptable. Military police deployments in support of hurricane disaster relief, and refugee contingencies in Cuba and Panama are but a few examples where MPs were an attractive alternative when exercising military power.

*Post Retirement Service*

After a short time with the Smithsonian Institute as the Director of Protection and Health, MG Hines accepted the position of President, Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas.

Prairie View A&M is a Historical Black College and University (HBCU). HBCUs commission over 50% of the black lieutenants in the active force. Accordingly, MG Hines understands and stresses the importance of educating the finest officers possible. He assists ROTC Cadet Command in balancing the academic and leadership requirements necessary to prepare these future officers.

MG Hines is a leading educator in Texas, and was recognized in 1994 as the Southern Leadership Conference's Outstanding Black Man in recognition of his military career, and his contribution in promoting the advancement of minorities and women in the military and academia.

#### **MG HINES' VIEW ON CURRENT ISSUES**

##### *Women in Basic Training*

During the interview MG Hines offered valuable insights concerning the of women in basic training. He stated his belief that the sexual misconduct incidents at Aberdeen Proving Ground and other basic training posts center around power. What is the amount of power a drill instructor should have? MG Hines

contends that few people understand the perceived power a drill sergeant has over recruits. New recruits at basic training are often away from home for the first time. The recruiter tells them that success hinges on satisfying the drill sergeant. The officer leadership at Aberdeen failed to recognize these power dimensions. This reinforced MG Hines' belief that all commissioned officers should serve enlisted time. To illustrate, he commented that he has trouble remembering the names of first sergeants and sergeant majors who served with him. He will never forget the name of his drill sergeant. MG Hines believes one cannot understand the power dynamics, unless you are a product of a drill sergeant's mentoring in basic training.

For female recruits, the interaction with a male drill sergeant is especially complex. Army studies show that significant numbers of enlisted women have a history of sexual abuse as a child. One of the primary reasons women join the Army is to escape an abusive relationship at home. A Wall Street Journal article noted that "...a recent study by mental health researcher Loren Rosen of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, found that 49% of female soldiers had suffered childhood sexual abuse, nearly double the civilian rate."<sup>3</sup>

With this dynamic in mind, MG Hines believes that the current basic training system will not work. If many female enlistees experience sexual abuse prior to basic training, then "many of them may think this is the way the world is supposed to be."<sup>4</sup> Link this with male drill sergeants experiencing unaccustomed power and authority, and the potential for trouble is great. MG Hines contends that with the Army downsizing many officer positions in the basic training base were eliminated. Drill Sergeants go about their business with little supervision. This allows those with the propensity to prey on women more of an opportunity to do so.

MG Hines believes the current Army study of the problem must address the drill sergeant's power. "Somehow, the power connection has got to be maintained, but in some way diffused."<sup>5</sup> The focus must be on human psychology. For example, as the MP School Commandant, he required each drill sergeant to sign an agreement on sexual harassment. He personally briefed every drill sergeant class on sexual harassment's nature, including the directive that this was a zero defect area. Moreover, he advocated the assignment of more female noncommissioned officers as drill sergeants. These women serve as role models for the

female recruits and as another oversight on the basic training system.

*Women in the Army-Closed Branches*

MG Hines believes the Army will eventually open all branches to women. This change will be evolutionary. To him, the standard arguments against placing women in the combat arms are not valid. Those who argue that women do not have the strength to succeed in the combat arms, fail to realize that most combat MOS involve few individual tasks. Most tasks involve teams and team building. In terms of strength requirements, the most demanding MOS is that of medic, where women have been serving for years.

He discounts the argument that women and men in combat can not live in close proximity to each other. In the MP Corps, women serve in the full spectrum of combat and combat support roles with great success.

MG Hines believes the Army could easily assimilate women into all branches. It is the only way they will have true equality. The very senior leadership comes from the combat arms,

and women are at a disadvantage until they can gain access into those branches.

#### *Minority Officer Accessions*

Over the past ten years, minority cadets (especially blacks) commissioned through ROTC, tended to migrate away from the combat arms and into the combat service support arms. For example, in the past ten years, 14% of the officer accession cohorts were black cadets. During that same period, Infantry branch accessed an average of 12.7% blacks; Armor branch consisted of 13.7% blacks, and only 5.8% of Aviation branch accessions were black. In contrast, Ordnance Branch accessed an average of 15.6% blacks, while Quartermaster Branch consisted of 17.6% black lieutenants.<sup>6</sup> The question remains, why this dynamic?

MG Hines states the answer is simple. Minority cadets, especially blacks, join ROTC to learn a skill for future employment. The combat service support branches as in finance, quartermaster, and adjutant general, translate into the civilian world. Civilian skills are the attraction for minority cadets.

White cadets tend to join ROTC for the adventure. They are more interested in the culture of the infantry and armor branches because they do not feel as threatened about civilian job security.

Assuming this assessment is true, how could the Army change the dynamic? MG Hines responded that he did not think it could, if branch placement is left up to the cadets. The system has to force the change. Accordingly, the accession management system must force minority cadets into the combat arms. The path to the very senior Army leadership, begins with being accessed as a combat arms officer. Once accessed, a cohort's makeup for a year group changes very little. Therefore, the Army must design an officer accession system that ensures that each branch is reflective of the cohort population.

He believes there are proactive steps combat arms' branches could initiate to inform minority cadets of the advancement potential in their branch. Opportunities exist in ROTC basic and advance camps for minority cadets to become better acquainted with the combat arms. Such opportunities can be leveraged to increase the propensity for minority cadets to seek combat arms branching.

Moreover, ROTC should continue its policy of assigning only combat arms' officers as Professors of Military Science (PMS) at the HBCUs. The HBCUs currently produce over 50% of the black cadets for each cohort. These cadets need quality combat arms' officers as role models. An officer on the fast track, assigned to ROTC, can demonstrate tremendous potential in the combat arms during the most critical decision window for future lieutenants.

In particular, MG Hines purports the Army must recruit qualified black cadets for aviation training. Aviation skills have obvious civilian skills' application. More importantly, it is the combat arm's branch armed with a focused recruiting program, most likely to attract significant numbers of black cadets. Once branched combat arms and successful, many minority officers will choose to remain in the Army, and eventually, comprise a representative part of the senior Army leadership.

### *Conclusions*

The lessons from MG Hines' distinguished career are clear. Although any organization possesses those who would disadvantage others because of their race or gender, responsible leadership

fosters the capacity within that organization to do the right things.

MG Hines agrees that the Army leads the nation in its programs and policies to help everyone rise to their full potential. However, the system is not perfect. Army leadership must continually work to ensure that racism and gender biases are addressed appropriately and aggressively. The current situation in the Army is not bleak, but the leadership must remain focused in these areas.

Our Army and the nation owe much to individuals like MG Hines. He had the courage to challenge the system when he felt it was wrong. He set professional and educational goals, and then set a course to achieve those goals. He also expanded his personal goals and values into every organization he touched. MG Hines is a consummate role model for all officers. He states he truly misses the Army, and will never forget the outstanding men and women with whom he served throughout his career.

Interviewing officers and NCOs who served with MG Hines, it was apparent that he left a lasting, positive impact on many of them.

CSM(RET) Joshua Perry, the former MP Corps Regimental Sergeant Major relates a story at Fort McClellan while MG Hines

was the post commander. The story captures part of what many were saying about MG Hines' compassion and caring for the individual soldier.

According to CSM Perry, MG Hines took his daughter to the post hospital on a weekend. She was running a very high fever. When MG Hines got to the hospital, they discovered that the wait to see a doctor was very long. Rather than jump the line ahead of other soldiers, MG Hines insisted that he wait his turn "...just like all other soldiers."<sup>7</sup>

COL John Davies served with MG Hines in several different capacities. The one overriding attribute COL Davies remembers about MG Hines was about how much he cared for soldiers [and their families]. Whatever decision he was prepared to make, the one constant question MG Hines asked was, "How will this impact on the soldier and his family?"<sup>8</sup>

Both of these examples demonstrate the impact one soldier can make on those with whom he serves. Much of the present MP officer leadership is a product of MG Hines' mentoring and coaching. He shaped these officers and noncommissioned officers in his image, instilling in them a set of core values that insists that all soldiers be treated with dignity and respect. Furthermore, the MP Corps possesses a healthy mix of senior

officers and noncommissioned officers who truly reflect America. Without exception, these senior leaders remember MG Hines' insistence that in all aspects of the Army, sensitivity to racial and gender issues is paramount.

Even in retirement, MG Hines is still serving the Army and the nation. As a university president and educator, he is a valuable asset in academia telling the Army story. Working with ROTC Cadet Command, he is continually searching for new ways to improve the academic potential of minority cadets. These cadets will have a better chance for success in the Army and serve as future role models for other minority cadets. MG Hines is a strong role model for hundreds of cadets including minorities who want to be like him. His is truly a great American success story.

**END NOTES**

1. MG(RET) Charles A. Hines, SOOHP interview by author, transcript pg 105, 16 December 1996, Prairie View, Texas.
2. Hines SOOHP interview transcript, pg 22.
3. Thomas E. Ricks, "Face of Today's Army Holds Surprises," Wall Street Journal, 6 January 1997, sec. A, pg 6.
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5. Hines SOOHP interview transcript, pg 104.
6. Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff Personnel, DCS PER 64 Personnel Report, 26 November 1996.
7. Joshua Perry, CSM(RET), former MP Corps Regimental Sergeant Major, telephone interview by author, 22 November 1996.
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